

7. Religion.

The sedentary population of Turkestan as well as the Kazakhs 771
profess themselves to be Sunnite Moslems. But whereas the Kazakhs 656
are really Moslems only in name, the sedentary people, especially 661
the sedentary Uzbeks, have been marked from the beginning by great
fanaticism, and probably in this connection they deserve first place
among all the followers of Islam. This fanaticism was nurtured
primarily by the so-called 'rais' 'duvanas' and 'ishans', of which
the first have at present been abolished in the Russian possessions.
The 'rais' were officials appointed by the government, whose chief
task was to supervise the strict fulfillment of the precepts of the Ko-
ran, and to punish those who were indifferent or unconcerned. They
were equipped for this purpose with a whip made of a wide, thick
leather thong, and a wooden handle, with which they drove together
to prayers those who systematically avoided the visits to the mosques.
In addition, they mercilessly whipped the tradespeople in the bazaars
who were guilty of profiting at the expense of the public through
false measures or weights. Also the management of the control of
prostitutes was transferred to the rais, and those evildoers caught [548]
'in flagrante' were punished in a truly barbaric fashion. Since the
rais were just as corruptible as the other officials, as a rule they
called only those people to account who did not have the means to
buy themselves off, so that the official activity of the rais appeared
to be more of a well organized system of extortion. Since the Russians
naturally had no particular interest in nurturing the fanaticism of the
population of their Central Asian possessions, which was directed
against all those of other creeds, they abolished the office of the
rais in the areas under their domination, and they exist at the pre-
sent time only in the khanates which are still independent.

/196/ The 'duvanas' are, in Turkestan, what the dervishes or 792
'kalantars' are in other Moslem lands. The duvanas usually live in
a cloistered community and are celibates, although there are also
married duvanas. Their number is rather large; at every bazaar and
at every fair one meets whole crowds of singing, screeching duvanas,
who assess the public for contributions. Their influence and the
respect which they enjoy among the people is very great, which has
always remained a mystery to me, for one can scarcely imagine a
more vulgar, impudent, and repulsive throng than the duvanas. They

places, where upward of a dozen people are crammed together, whose 697
smell alone in the great heat would be unbearable. Over and above this,
the unfortunates are tormented by an enormous number of bugs, ticks,
lice, rats and every other sort of vermin, which in such a favorable and
fertile medium, multiply to an unbelievable extent. The inmates of
these terrible martyr cells are not always real criminals; the majority is
completely innocent, brought here by the whims of the ruler and the
intrigues of political enemies, and they are often completely forgotten,
and must then breathe their last in this kind of hideous surrounding. The
two English travelers, Stoddard and Connolly, who were executed by
the Emir Nasr Allah in 1842, must have languished in such prisons in
the town of Bukhara before they were executed. The Russians have nat-
urally cleaned out such horrors within their possessions and use all
their influence to make the conditions more humane in the states of
Central Asia which are still independent; whether they are successful,
no one is in a position to know.

Mutilations must have been employed rather frequently in earlier 681
times in Turkestan as legal punishment, judging by the large number 685
of persons one still saw in my time going about as beggars, with miss-
ing noses, hands, or even feet. These punishments were usually applied
to thieves, whom they wished to render harmless or at least to single
out in this fashion. For this reason most of those punished in this manner
are Kazakhs, who see nothing wrong in stealing, but on the contrary
consider it an honorable sport. The sedentary population fails to see
the joke in this respect. The thieves had their hands cut off at the
wrists, the feet were cut off at the ankles, but the noses were cut off
as smoothly as though they had never had them. The ears of those who
had already been legally punished once or more were slit or cut off as
well, depending on the circumstances, and this kind of mutilation
formed a kind of penalty list for those concerned in any sort of later
conflicts with the law.

Death sentences were employed very often in the Central Asian 681
states, just as in Bukhara until the most recent times theft, adultery, 661
prostitution, and even the use of wine was punishable by death. But
the greatest number of victims were always provided by the whim and
suspicion /215/ of the rulers, who believed they could strengthen their
thrones only by means of cruelty and the destruction of all individuals
who were in any way suspicious. One may see from the example of the
last Khan of Kokand to what extremes many khans went in this respect.
He once ordered 20,000 Kipchaks executed, simply from vexation be-

681 cause until that time he had been under the tutelage of a Kipchak, and
 661 this had inconvenienced him. The most ruthless tyrant was unquestion-
 ably the Bukharan Emir Nasr Allah who ordered the execution not only
 of the two Englishmen mentioned above, and the Khan of Kokand Mo-
 hammed Ali, but even of his own wife and nearest kin. He filled the
 prisons with favorites fallen into disfavor and with the highest dignitaries.

681 In Turkestan the commonest manner of execution is by cutting the
 throat; beheading is, on the other hand, not customary. The executioner
 places the offender in front of him on the ground, with his hands tied,
 takes him by the chin with his left hand, and cuts his throat in two with
 an ordinary table knife. As a rule, ordinary criminals are executed
 publicly in the bazaar in this manner, and little ceremony is made of it.
 /Figure 77. Caption: The Mir-Arab Minaret in Bukhara. The place of
 execution for serious criminals. / The executioner leads the criminals
 turned over to him into the bazaar, on market days without further es-
 cort or preliminaries. /216/ There he himself picks out the most el-
 evated spot possible, and slaughters his victims one after another, ex-
 actly the way sheep are slaughtered.

Along with throat-cutting, hanging is also in general use. This
 is considered, as with us, the most disgraceful manner of death. Those
 condemned to die by the rope are either hanged over the gateways which
 is done especially in the cases of rebels and political criminals as a
 horrible example, or they are strung up on gallows which are erected
 permanently in the bazaar squares of every town. The condemned has
 a rope put around his neck by which he is pulled up in the air and tied
 fast about a meter above the ground. The native two-wheeled wagons
 are also often used for hangings when there happen to be no gallows
 near by. The person to be hung is fastened by a noose to one of the
 wagon shafts and then the back end of the wagon is pushed down to
 the ground, whereby the shaft with the person to be hung is speeded
 upwards. This manner of hanging was used, for example, for those
 Russians who had the misfortune to fall into the hands of Kokand during
 the war in 1876 and who refused to be converted to Islam.

In Bukhara, being hurled down from the Minaret of Mir-Arab,
 shown in Figure 77 (p. 215), is considered the chief punishment. This
 minaret, which stands in an open square in the center of the town of
 Bukhara, is built of firebricks and is 52 meters high, the highest tower in
 all of Central Asia. The gravest criminals are thrown down from the
 platform of this minaret onto the pavement, which they reach, nat-
 urally, only as formless masses. During the stay of the Russian General
 Matveyev in Bukhara in 1884, a criminal was executed in this manner

CH. IX NATIONALISM AND COLONIAL EMPIRE

153

many years the Tsars had been toying with the idea of sweeping all this aside, but so strong was local sentiment that they had failed to act. But by a decree of May 1924 the Soviets [312] vested all control of distribution of water in the State. And they applied it ruthlessly. The result was to remove settlement of disputes from the tribal authority near at hand, substituting an impersonal officialdom, and at the same time to enable authority at the desired moment to decree without gainsaying the kind of crop which should be sown and the arbitrary price for which it would be taken up. The reform also served the purpose of shifting the weight of economic and political power from the people to the Party. It was easier to carry out in the areas of intensive cultivation where farmers were tied to the land and must have water or starve, and where a redistribution by means of robbing Peter to pay Paul had at least some chance of pleasing Paul. But even here there was a fierce struggle between the Party and the traditional leaders who were often loved and trusted by the people and understood their minds. These leaders were at first able to prevail over the Party men in local elections, and the latter had to resort to confiscation of crops, hay and cattle, and even to expulsion of big landowners, before they could prevail. 665 661●

On the steppe it was much more difficult to carry through 177 the process, for the nomads were seldom tied to definite holdings, and the tribal allegiance to the chieftain was in the patriarchal tradition. John Littlepage,¹ the American mining engineer, who spent the ten years from 1928 in the midst of this country, has described with obvious sincerity exactly what he saw of conditions before the Second Russian Revolution of 1929 (as he calls it) and after it. In 1928, before collectivization, tribal life on the steppe was scarcely touched. Meat and food were plentiful and the tribes came and went with their herds as they had been used to do. But the Kremlin had already announced that the nomad's life was demoralizing and must be broken up. And that meant the destruction of the old tribal organization, and the conversion of the tribes,

¹ Bib. I, 62.

563 lady was working under her husband in one of his laboratories. But 'My husband is a Kazak,' she said, 'allow me to introduce him'. Behind the comfortable assertions of harmony there lurks the impression that she patronized her husband and treated him as a sort of interesting exhibit. This very Satpaiev is one of those pilloried in the 1951 press for seeking to defend colleagues accused of nationalist deviations. Even the possession of a Russian wife has not availed to protect him, or else the Kazak in him has not been wholly tamed. Many, like Satpaiev, have fallen in the race after they had served their turn.

661
186 More recently there has been no pretence of the respectability of nationalism. The press teems with abuse and diatribes to the address of any public man with a Muslim name who may be held suspect for a display of nationalistic tendencies. Many have been purged. Early examples were Faizullah Khojaev,¹ chairman of the Uzbek Council of Ministers, and Ikramov, secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party. Others have had short shrift. The usual gazette formula applied to men of high place, up to the rank of Premier of a republic, is to say they are 'removed to attend a special study course' or 'for duties elsewhere'. A recent case is that of Abdul jabbar Abdurrahmanov, another chairman of the Council of Ministers in Uzbekistan, a man widely publicized for orthodox views up to 1950 and decorated with the Order of Lenin. He disappeared in April of that year, charged with violation of the constitution and turning the Uzbek Communist Party into an asylum for reactionary elements. At the same time his Deputies, Ghulamov and Kichamov, were mentioned as 'no longer there' when a new government was formed.

As things are, the very word of nationalism is one of the unholy things, and it is a far journey back to the Declaration of 1917. Every force that can be thought of has been applied

¹ For an interesting description of this man in his Soviet hey-day see Bib. I, 66, p. 172.

CH. IX NATIONALISM AND COLONIAL EMPIRE

161

to overcome any centrifugal impulse in the colonial territories of the Soviet Empire. First in order was the power derived from the presence of a Russian population, infusing into a plural society an outside element as strong as are the Chinese in Malaya. The monolithic Constitution, the rooting of the Party sprung from its parent stem, the artificial division of natural local unities, applied education and linguistics — all these pressures have been steadily brought to bear against the realization of national or industrial particularism over a period of some thirty years. And in the background, always present, is the secret police and military force at the disposal of the Union.

The flood is the same flood as that which swept over Turkistan in Tsarist days. Like the waters of the Oxus after storms in the mountains, it may be turgid, but it is the same river, unpredictable in the direction of its attack, but submerging the landmarks till all is flat and even and the last resistance is overcome.

471 an aristocracy. All this was to be violently changed by centralized decree from the Kremlin, a second Russian Revolution.

The outward shape of what was then conceived and carried through has often been described. The whole conception was indeed two-headed — to collectivize and mechanize agriculture, and use the displaced peasants and nomads as unskilled labour for the new industries which were being set up. The American mining engineer Littlepage,¹ who saw it all from the inside, describes well both the central conception and the manner of its execution.

A conversation something like the following must have taken place at headquarters in Moscow. One of the big Communists said 'Well, what will we do about it? We can't put through our plans for industry unless we have a few million workers who will stay put. There will be too much of a howl if we simply make the free workers stay where they are. What can we do?' And someone would answer, 'Why not liquidate the Kulaks? We can kill two birds with one stone, get these obstinate small farmers away from the villages where they obstruct our scheme for collectivization and at the same time get plenty of industrial labor which will stay put because it is under police guard.'

THE PEASANTRY

474 He goes on to tell what he saw of the peasants being
661 dragooned round the country under police escort and set down as forced labour to work in mines and factories. Men, women and children were driven out of their houses, and their furniture, domestic animals and all but a few clothes were taken from them, the confiscated houses being taken into use as clubs and offices. Some were herded along the camel-trails, others, packed like animals in cattle trucks, in stifling heat or bitterness of winter, were despatched by rail to centres where their labour was needed. Many died of hunger, cold or disease on the way. All seemed completely bewildered; they had lost their homes, had been forcibly removed from

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 78.

lands their families had occupied for generations, and put at 474 unfamiliar work in unfamiliar surroundings. Fewer still made 661 any effort to escape, their experiences seemed to have broken up any spirit of defiance they may have had before. He explains how the numbers of peasants available made the federal police the largest single employers in Russia, and gave them a reputation for getting things done. They could always count on a steady supply of labour, that great forced-labour army which started from the days of the so-called liquidation of the Kulaks. In this way the double end was served, opposition to collective farming stifled and the sinews of industry provided.

The policy of collectivization was directed both at the settled farmers and at the nomads, but with the former was easier to achieve. In Central Asia the peasants do not usually live in scattered farms on their lands but congregate in villages huddled together for protection and defence and enjoying from ancient times some degree of communal life based on their tribal past. Each cultivator goes out daily, and sometimes nightly, from the village to his fields which are often in several parts of the village lands. One man, for instance, will cultivate his ancestral share of the best irrigated land, a similar share of land not so good, perhaps dependent on rainfall, and a share in the village common or waste where the herds pasture. The water-rights will be held in theory in common, and apportioned by ancestral shares according to traditional needs. This system was not without a collective tribal background and with sympathy and vision it might not have been impossible to have introduced reforms gradually leading to a commonalty which, taking account of tradition, should have combined the incentive of individual user with the needs of the whole village community. That, however, is what Communists would nowadays call a feudal survivalist deviation, and it is not what happened. As we have seen, the Communists aimed not at a form of collectivism which should be the most efficient consistent with its acceptability by the people, but at very greatly reducing the number of workers in the fields in order to supply industry. Redeployment in industry was

474 perhaps the most important part of the plan — proletarianiza-
●661 tion as they called it.¹ They did not therefore try for a
revivified tribal system, but aimed at a complete reorganization
of village life, by means of a consolidation of small-holdings
into large fields to be worked by a mechanized agriculture.
In practice, this meant not only the dispossession of the more
efficient and more prosperous farmers, but such an amalgama-
tion of lands as to produce complete confusion of the identities
of possession and user.

Essential grazing-lands came under the plough. All
incentive was at least temporarily removed, and the Party
slave-driver could not be everywhere at once. Thousands of
cattle died of starvation or were deliberately slaughtered by
the peasants in protest. The initial disasters caused even the
Soviet planners to modify original plans and eventually to
allow homestead holdings of a limited acreage for the individual
peasant to cultivate outside the commonalty. Togan describes
the position in Farghana, the richest part of Turkistan. The
people were starving, and half the people landless. Draught
oxen had perished in thousands. The people were exposed to
every form of official tyranny and persecution — imprison-
ment, plunder, deportation, execution for those that stood out.
Draught cattle that remained were seized and tractors brought
in and shown to the farmers on condition that they should be
used for cotton cultivation only and by those only who would
join the *Kolkhoz*. The peasants, robbed of their horses and
oxen, found their fate depending on machinery from Russia,
using oil which then had also to be imported, and mechanics
then also Russian. They were helpless.

Another American, John Scott,² has a vivid description of
the methods adopted for the 'dekulakization' of a village.

'How did they decide who was to be dekulakized?' 'Ah, that's
a hell of a question to ask a guy that's trying to expiate his crimes in

¹ During the second Five-Year Plan directions were issued to release 1,500,000
workers annually from agriculture to industry. This was for the whole Union.

² Bib. I, 85. A sincere admirer of the indomitable determination shown by Stalin
and others in pushing through industrialization beyond the Urals, Scott also underlines
the cost in blood and tears. He worked for five years at Magnitogorsk.

CH. XI

SUPPRESSION OF NOMADISM

179

honest labor. Just between the three of us, though, the poor peasants of the village get together in a meeting and decide: "So-and-so has six horses; we couldn't very well get along without those in the collective farm; besides he hired a man last year to help on the harvest." They notify the GPU and there you are. So-and-so gets five years. They confiscate his property and give it to the new collective farm. Sometimes they ship the whole family out. When they came to ship us out, my brother got a rifle and fired several shots at the GPU officers. They fired back. My brother was killed. All of which, naturally, didn't make it any better for us. We all got five years, and in different places. I heard my father died in December, but I'm not sure.

All this¹ happened more than twenty years ago. Since then Communist ranks have swollen and absorbed hundreds of the people of the soil, official statistics show the usual propaganda figure of 98 or 99 per cent of the peasants in the *Kolkhoz*, and the Kazaks and Uzbeks have begun to qualify as mechanics. The new economy is settling down and the Soviets would have the world believe that, in spite of backslidings, the peasants are docile and apt to the mechanical age which has overtaken them. The cotton expansion policy has ridden on shortage and misery to triumph; industry and mineral wealth have been developed (the former largely by the establishment of textile mills for cotton and silk in Turkistan itself) and the connection with Siberia by the Turk-Sib Railway, opened in 1930, is a permanent symbol of a new economic era. Perhaps most significant of all, the Soviets have insisted on the emancipation of women, making the discarding of the veil the touchstone of loyalty to the new idea. In this, let it be remarked, they run counter only to the orthodox tradition of Bukhara and the south, and not to that of the nomad, whose women, riding freely on the steppe, were never veiled. On a short or a long view the removal of the *paranja* must be regarded as a beneficent reform, against which no Central Asian nationalist would find it easy to exclaim. Lastly, in the oases at least, there are signs of plenty, and even of the emergence of a new Party aristocracy. The fatted calf can still be killed, and favoured visitors lick their lips as they

¹[collectivization; see cat. 116, pp. 175-179 -- Analyst]

CH. XI

SUPPRESSION OF NOMADISM

183

reformers believed that they were doing them a favor by breaking **000** up their old forms of life and persuading them, even by the use of force, to adopt a manner of life considered more civilized and sensible. On this trip, however (undertaken in 1934), as we pushed along day after day through these pastured plateaus, my sympathies went out to those nomads who had forcibly resisted their conversion into proletarians. . . . I could see how the life might appeal to them. . . . I even began to understand how they might be willing to fight for this mode of existence if someone threatened to take them away from it.

The job⁴ was done not by redistribution, but by the **474** indiscriminate rounding-up of the nomads with their animals. **661** • Nearly half those who did not die, men and women, went off to slavery. Three-quarters of the flocks and herds were slaughtered or perished uncared-for in the wilderness. When all was over, nothing remained to be seen on the steppe but once in a while a small village of Russian settlers whose ancestors had pushed into the Kazak country half a century earlier and, very occasionally, a small group of felt huts occupied by miserable-looking down-at-heel Kazaks who had been induced to settle down in cattle-breeding farms.

Lest it be thought that this picture is too highly coloured, let us turn to Soviet sources. The *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, a cautiously written compilation, relates¹ that, in spite of preventive measures taken by the Central Committee, most serious deviations from the Party line took place in Kazakhstan, making it easier for the beys, the Kulaks and the Alash-Orda elements to carry out anti-Soviet and anti-revolutionary activity. 'But', it concludes, 'with the help of the Central Committee of the Communist Party these mistakes in the set-up of the *Kolkhoz* system were put right.' We need only turn to the census returns to see how matters were put right, by measures leading to the death of one in three of the Kazak population, whether by mass starvation or by violence. That is the true picture of Soviet colonial imperialism. To allow of due completion of this process it was necessary for the

¹ G. S. Encycl. vol. 30, p. 508. Bib. III, 10.

- 474 Soviets to retain Kazakhstan as a part of the RSFSR (the Great
 661 Russian republic) up to 1936. It was only then, as it was
 openly stated, that it became possible and safe to confer on
 'the Kazaks' even the circumscribed and illusory autonomy
 enjoyed by a non-Russian constituent republic. The delay
 is the more remarkable given the very large proportion of
 Russians in Kazakhstan.

THE STOCK

- 233 The story is not yet complete. Herdsmen cannot be killed
 670 off without loss of the animals which serve them and which
 they serve. In Kazakhstan in 1935 there was only 1.7 head of
 cattle for each household grouped in a collective farm, and
 6500 collective farms were altogether without a herd. The
 livestock losses over the whole republic in the six years 1928-
 1934 were estimated at 73 per cent of the cattle, 87 per cent of
 the sheep, and 83 per cent of the horses.¹ The real wealth of
 the country in men and livestock had been sacrificed on the
 altar of the collective deity, and there is reason to think that
 the losses then suffered have not been restored even today.

A study of the current Soviet press on the subject of
 stock-raising and stock-farming throughout Soviet Central
 Asia reveals an attitude and atmosphere of inspissated gloom.
 In Uzbekistan, for instance, it is admitted that progress has
 been thoroughly unsatisfactory; the required increase in the
 number of publicly-owned sheep and cattle has in no case
 been achieved, the organization of winter feeding has broken
 down, and what is called mass-political work among the
Kolkhoz and *Sovkhoz* workers on the collective farms has been
 ineffective. The same tale comes from Kirghizia and Kazaki-
 stan, and also from the Tajik Republic. To go even farther
 afield, it is repeated in strident tones from the Caucasus, where
 special complaint is made of delays in the mechanization and
 electrification of processes in the care of stock. Plans have
 not been fulfilled; veterinary services, irrigation, scientific

¹ Soviet sources quoted by M. Holdsworth, *Bib. II*, 9.

MUSLIMS OF SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

153

to play an important role in the life of the Central Asian Muslims of the Soviet Union.

Let us now turn to other Islamic customs and practices. Circumcision appears from the interviews to be almost universally observed by Central Asian Muslims. One of the reasons for its prevalence is its tolerance by the regime, caused by the fact that this practice requires neither abstention from work nor the transfer of personal allegiance from the state to the religion, and in fact may be justified by hygienic reasons. It is performed by mendicant "specialists," who visit villages and towns, or by anyone else skilled in the use of appropriate instruments, such as local barbers. Communist Party members and other persons in positions of responsibility who may be incriminated in the eyes of the regime by observing this practice, send their children to relatives away from home, where they can be circumcised without the knowledge of the local authorities. Circumcision seems to have lost its festive character, and is carried out so as to attract the minimum attention. Its prevalence among all layers of Muslim society, including Communist Party members, has been attested to by every one of the refugees interviewed.

The religious ceremonies attending births, weddings, and burials require the presence of religiously trained figures such as the mullahs, and it is the great shortage of such persons which more than any factor deprives them of their religious character. The vast majority of mullahs and other Muslim leaders disappeared during the terror of 1928-32. Careful questioning of refugees revealed that in some villages and towns mullahs did remain all throughout the 1930's. These "hidden mullahs" earned their livelihood as ordinary workers (e.g., kolkhoz laborers, night watchmen, etc.) and often as janitors in mosques and other religious buildings, but when the occasion arose could also conduct religious ceremonies if the latter were organized by trusted friends and within a closed family circle. Almost every one of the refugees interviewed remembered either knowing of such a clandestine mullah or of having heard of one. But they are few and live under the perpetual threat of exposure and arrest; hence, they cannot make a great impression on the religious life of their communities. Where there is need for persons with religious training, the natives are far more likely to use the services of an elderly layman from their own midst than risk engaging a person who is difficult to locate and may involve them in trouble with the authorities.

As a consequence of the disappearance of the religious leaders, births, weddings, and burials appear to have largely lost their religious complexion and become transformed into occasions for mere family gatherings. The entire institution of betrothal — which will be described at greater length below — conforms closely to secular local traditions, but is no longer accompanied by religious ceremonies. Occasionally, refugees indicate; after

MUSLIMS OF SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

297

mated between 1926 and 1939 at 1,300,000 — settled not in the steppe but in Turkestan. While the 1939 census did not provide ethnographic breakdowns for the individual republics (with one exception noted below*), it is possible, by comparing the growth of the population within the individual republics with the total growth of the major Central Asian ethnic groups (both reported by Soviet sources), to arrive at a reasonably close estimate of the distribution of the Russian newcomers:

In the Uzbek Republic.....	720,000
In the Kirghiz Republic.....	285,000
In the Tajik Republic.....	155,000
In the Turkmen Republic.....	135,000

More than one-half of the migrants, in other words, settled in the Uzbek Republic, where in all probability most of them moved into the towns (Tashkent especially) and the expanding industrial centers of the Ferghana valley. In the Tajik and Turkmen Republics most of the Russian newcomers probably also settled in the cities, while in Kirghizia, where there were numerous Russian agricultural settlements of pre-Revolutionary vintage, they moved into the countryside as well (the total urban population of the Kirghiz Republic grew, between 1926 and 1939, only by 150,000, whereas the total Russian population there increased in the same period by an estimated 285,000 immigrants).

Another factor which increased the ratio of Russians to Muslims in Central Asia was the decline in the Muslim population of the steppe due to the terrors of the period of collectivization. According to Soviet census statistics, the Kazakh population of the Soviet Union decreased between 1926 and 1939 from 3,960,000 to 3,099,000 — a decline of about a million and a half if one takes into consideration the normal rate of growth.

Thus, by 1939 the Muslims probably formed less than one-half of the inhabitants in the steppe region and about four-fifths of those in Turkestan. The ratio of Muslims to Russians in all of Central Asia dropped from 15 to 1 in 1897 to less than 4 to 1 in 1939. Obviously, such a rapid demographic change was bound to have profound effects on the ability of the natives to preserve their ethnic identity, the more so since the influx of Russians appears to have continued undiminished after 1939, becoming particularly rapid during the period of war-time evacuation (1942-44) and the new program of Russian and Ukrainian settlement in the Kazakh steppes since 1952.

On the face of it, Russian migration threatens the natives with eventual destruction. Central Asia appears to be faced with ethnic Russification,

* The Turkmen SSR is the exception. Official Soviet statistics for 1939, when the total population of this republic was 1,251,900, break down its ethnic structure as follows: Turkmen 59.2 percent; Russians 18.7 percent; Uzbeks 8.5 percent; Kazakhs 4.9 percent; other nationalities 8.7 percent. Z. G. Freilkin, *Turkmenstana SSR* (Moscow, 1954), p. 34.

517 668 The Russian Muslims already possessed such a class prior to 1917, consisting largely of professional people, especially lawyers, teachers, journalists, and engineers from the Kazan and Baku areas. This intelligentsia played a leading role in the Muslim national movements during the Revolution and the period immediately following it; many of its members cooperated with the Soviet regime in the 1920's, during the era of Communist "softness" toward Muslim nationalism; others, especially those who had been connected with the White Guard movement during the Civil War, went into hiding or disassociated themselves from all further political activity.

517 661 Most of the older Muslim intelligentsia of the Soviet Union — pro-Communist and anti-Communist alike — was physically destroyed in the course of the purges, arrests, deportations, and executions of the 1930's. On the eve of World War II Soviet Muslims found themselves without national leadership, since the only other classes capable of providing it — the landowners, merchants, and the clergy — had also been liquidated in the course of the simultaneous drives for collectivization and against the Islamic religion in the late 1920's and early 1930's.

It is a perennial dilemma of the Soviet system that its dynamic totalitarianism requires an unusually large body of trained officials, and yet it cannot permit these officials the freedom of thought and action which they demand in consequence of their training. The principal solution which Communism has so far been able to devise for this problem consists of periodic purges, causing the destruction of the established bureaucracy and its replacement with ever new personnel — a procedure very costly in terms of manpower, but roughly serving the purpose for which it is devised. However, the system of purges, mass as well as local, requires constant repetition, for purge as it may, the Soviet regime cannot alter the fact that the intelligentsia, whose growth it is actively promoting, chafes under the yoke of totalitarianism and constitutes one of the major sources of tension within the established order.

517 It is this feature of its system which compelled the Soviet regime to replace the old intelligentsia of Central Asian Muslims destroyed by it with a new one. The new intelligentsia is largely Soviet-educated, and comprises people most of whom are today under 40 years of age. This new intelligentsia is, by comparison with the old, pre-Revolutionary one, very numerous. According to Soviet statistics for 1939, in the 5 republics of Central Asia there were 66,000 active students in technical and other specialized schools above the high-school level, and 35,000 active students in universities and other institutions of higher learning. Central Asia also had 758,000 persons with a completed high-school education and 57,000 with a completed higher education. Even allowing that a sizable proportion of these persons consists of Russians and other Europeans, the number of Muslims among them must be very considerable. Measured by Western European

[i.e., an intelligentsia — Analyst]